

Children's Ministry Lesson: January 17, 2021

Bullying

One would think that, after all that has been said and done over the past few years, we would not need to say anything to children about bullying. Sadly, as with many things that should have been left behind us, this is not the case. Talk a bit about what bullying is:

Bullying is when someone uses their power to hurt, frighten, exclude or insult someone else. Bullying often occurs between people close in age and is never okay. Bullying can affect a person's feelings, relationships, self-esteem and sense of safety. It can also make people feel uncomfortable in everyday situations at home, work or school.

Bullying can come in many different forms including:

- **Physical bullying:** harassing someone by hitting, shoving, tripping or any other use of physical force.
- **Emotional or psychological bullying:** harassing someone with verbal attacks, hurtful comments, name-calling or teasing.
- **Cyberbullying:** harassing someone over social media, text, email, websites and other digital channels.
- **Social bullying:** harassing someone by excluding them, spreading rumours or giving them "the silent treatment."
- **Discriminatory bullying:** harassing someone based on sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or anything else perceived as making them "different."

Be aware that some children may know first-hand. Then ask what we should do or say when we see bullying happen. This could be a way of introducing the concept of collective responsibility. Just because we are not doing it ourselves doesn't mean we are not involved. Discuss ways for children to safely respond (e.g., telling an adult rather than intervening in a fight). As followers of Jesus, we all have a responsibility to care for others.



Object Needed: Crayons

Big Idea: Love everyone, including the bullies.

Bullying Lesson:

Anybody remember when these were a daily part of your life? You've probably moved on to markers and colored pencils by now, but when you first started school, I bet every one of you had a pack of these. How many of you had the small one, the 12 pack? The 24 pack? Who got to have the big one with ALL the colors?

Crayons are a lot of fun, but there's a problem with crayons. (If you have some, break one in half now.) They break. They break very easily. And the bigger you get, the easier it is to break them. The bigger you get, the more careful you have to handle crayons if you don't want to break them.

If you're not careful, pretty soon you won't have any crayons left. You'll have a bunch of crayon pieces. Can you still color with them? Sure. But it's not as easy, and the smaller they get, the harder it is to play with them.

You know, people are a lot like crayons. We can be broken very easily, just like these crayons, if people mistreat us. Some of you may know kids who are in the habit of mistreating others. They think they can get what they want from people who are smaller, weaker, or just different than they are. They push others around. They call them names. They hurt a lot of people. Has anyone ever mistreated you like that?

Unfortunately, bullies are not just a problem you'll find in school. Bullies are everywhere, and everywhere they go, they leave broken people behind. The sad thing is that these bullies could have several friends if they wanted. But instead of trying to be nice to other people, they push and shove and break the people around them.

Pretty soon, what do they have left? A bunch of broken people. Yes, they can still push those broken people around. But do you think any of them really care for the bully? Do you think the bully has any real friends?

I want you to remember just how fragile these crayons are, because I want you to remember to treat others with kindness. What's more, I want you to be aware of the people around you—not just the bullies, but the people whom the bullies are mistreating. Nothing heals a broken person like love, and a little love can make a lot of difference in someone's life.

And don't forget, God wants us to love the bullies too. They may not look like it, but most of them are broken people too! Show a little love to a bully and you might make a real difference in your school.

Read-Along Story:

BULLY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ej1LIIN34SM>

Activity:

Supplies:

- Construction Paper
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue Stick

Steps:

1. Emotional bullies use words and gestures to hurt others. Some bullies use physical force. Make this caring chain as a reminder of ways to avoid intimidation and how to make friends.
2. Design paper rings. Use Crayola® Scissors to cut wide strips of construction paper. With Crayola Markers and your imagination, decorate the borders of each strip.
3. Write phrases. In the center of each strip, write a way that people are kind to one another: "Take turns." "Use a gentle voice." "Speak up for yourself!" "Offer to help."
4. Create a caring chain. Glue ends of loops with a Crayola Glue Stick to create a paper chain. Where can you hang this friendship reminder to catch attention?

Have a wonderful week!

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